This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

23404
42.3

WIDENER
HN P7QN Z

The Miller o' Duddingston. 1875

Digitized by Google

23494.42.3

Harvard College Library.

THE

LONGFELLOW COLLECTION

GIVEN BY

MISS ALICE M. LONGFELLOW,

In behalf of the family of the late Professor
HENRY W. LONGFELLOW.

Received

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE

MILLER O' DUDDINGSTON:

OR,

THE BETROTHAL.

BY

J. F.

EDINBURGH.

1875.

Digitized by Google

THE

MILLER O' DUDDINGSTON:

OR,

THE BETROTHAL.

BY

J. F.

EDINBURGH.

1875.

Digitized by Google

~~AL 38[illegible]~~
23494.42.3

✓ HARVARD COLLEGE LIBRARY

1884. Jan. 2.
Gift of
Miss Alice M. Longfellow,
of Cambridge.

Digitized by Google

NOTE.

This Poem, such as it is, is dedicated to a few kind friends and my fellow-workmen, who, when I was advised to try and have it published, most generously assisted me by giving their names as Subscribers. To them I return my sincere thanks; and while they will not find a rare and polished gem, they may still be able to have a spare hour to spend over it. For my humble self, it is most gratifying to know that my labour has not been all in vain,—my whole idea being to weave around Craigmillar and the secluded village of Duddingston a little more of the glamour of fiction and the halo of romance.

EDINBURGH, *September* 1875.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE MILLER O' DUDDINGSTON.

It was in the days o' auld lang syne,
The year or month I dinna min',
A winter's evening, gey an' late—
Faix I cannie mind aboot the date.
The hero is a dusty miller,
Fond o' swats an' rife o' siller,
'T is but a senseless, shapeless rhyme,
An' doggerel, that 's the warst o' crime.

Ne'er mind, for I maun tae my story,
Though it has neither fame nor glory,
I 'll try and dae the best I can.
Jock King was a douce, honest man,
Respected by his neebours roun',
Held a gude name in Embro' toon;
Lo'ed a boon cronie an' a crack,
An' didna owe the world a plack;
Went regular tae the kirk on Sunday,
An' Dalkeith market every Monday;
An' what was mair, his ain dear Bell,
He lo'ed her better than himsell;
His wife, his weans, an' his bit mill,
Tae him were bliss aboon a' ill;
Was gude an' kind tae auld an' puir,
They wish'd him heaven wi' monie a prayer;
Was ken'd for a richt breed o' horses,
Wha's fame was known on monie courses.

Sae Jock, upon his schemes intent,
Tae Dalkeith toon that morn was bent,
But lang or e'er that he wan hame,
A waefu' wifie was Jock's dame.
As Habb, the miller, frae Jock's stud,
Brocht roon a young mare o' best blud,
Jock bounded on his favourite filly,

Digitized by Google

Which paw'd the snaw as it were silly..
The toddling younkers laugh'd wi' glee—
Bell was as prood as she could be—
While collie bark'd an' loup'd as fain,
Same as the warld were a' there ain.
That morn he left for Dalkeith toon,
Soon tae be hame that afternoon;
Sae he promis'd, hap what may,
He wad be hame by close o' day;
Hae'in twa three errands tae dae for Bell,
An' twa or three nick-nacks for himsell.

The snaw lay deep on field an' shaw—
Puir bodies couldna work ava—
Jack frost had made his footing good,
The burns an' lochs a' freezing stood;
The thressher clatter'd at his flail,
Ootside was nocht but drift an' hail;
The ploughman shiver'd ower the fire,
Or faund his wark in barn or byre;
'Deed, beast an' bodie, young an' auld,
Were fair benumb'd wi' frost an' cauld.

Alas! for man's schemes an' purposes,
This life has got sae monie dozes—
Sae monie cross an' fitful whims,
Oor best laid schemes it often dims.
Puir mortals, we gang oft a glee,
Oor projects, schemes, no worth a flee;
Oor promises an' sage advices
Whiles are the counterplots o' vices;
Twa or three gude cheils we chance tae meet,
Wing'd pleasures then they taste sae sweet,
Ne'er mind for conscience though it ca',
Ne'er heed the shadow on the wa',
Wi' reeming swats an' rousing fire,
We burke oor heart's maist fond desire.
Oor pledge an' promise we hae broke,
The substance gane, a' else is smoke.
Syne comes remorse, oor hearts are riven,
Wondering giff we 'll be forgiven;
The lichts an' scenes that look'd sae fair,
Only bring madness an' despair.
Sae was 't wi' Jock, ere he got hame
That nicht tae his kind, couthie dame.

Digitized by Google

No, never since she 'd been a wife,
Had Bell felt sae in a' her life;
When gi'eing hawkie its bit fodder,
She fell intae an aw'some shudder,
As gloaming glinted ower the trees,
Or a loud sough groan'd in the breeze.
Puir Bell went often tae the door,
An' listen'd 'mid the tempest roar.
The waukrife winter's eerie moan,
The rifted woods despairing groan,
Wi' her bodie slightly bent,
List'ning wi' an ear intent
Tae catch the sma'est whush or sound,
Of a fitfa' upon the ground;
But feint a sound, or whush, or ca'
Was heard; an' noo the day was spent awa',
While mirk an' gloomie grew the nicht.
Nae word o' John, nae horse in sicht,
Bell sigh'd, an' mutter'd tae her sell,
I 'll gang the length o' the auld dell.
When a knock at the door was heard—
Bell started as she had been scaur'd—
It was Hab that rapp'd as he was passing,
An' hop'd that he was not trespassing;
O' speerings an' askings maist profuse,
Was startled when he heard the news.
What! John no hame, an' it sae late?
I hope he has nae tint his gate!
Let 's tak the lantren an' gang ower
Tae whaur the Pow its waters pour.
A wearie trodge,—naething they saw,
But trees an' cluds an' drifting snaw.
Wae Bell ne'er spoke: tae tell the truth,
Her heart was in her very mouth.
Whaur could he be? what was John keeping?
She stagger'd; it was Hab was speaking.
Ah, Hab! I wish tae gude that I could tell—
That's what I 'm thinking tae my sell;
Waes me, but I 'm a wae, wae woman,
There 's something in it maist uncommon:
John never stay'd sae late before.
Hech, me! an' here we 're at the door:
An' sic a nicht! my, what a nicht!
Puir John will be in sic a plicht.
Hab stood an' glower'd far ben the fire,

Digitized by Google

He thocht, but couldna' weel enquire—
Sair perplex'd wi' schemes an' doots—
Intae his maister's in's an' oot's.
Gang hame, kind Hab, I 'll sit an' wait,
An' though it should be e'er sae late,
I 'll let ye ken when John comes hame—
He 's maybe no jist a' tae blame.
Sae thocht the wife, that lo'ed Jock weel,
Wi' kindly heart an' true as steel,
She sat her doon, an' thocht an' thocht,
But thinking mair confusion brocht.
Had she but ken'd, had she but seen it,
Her spouse sae bricht that very minute,
At Dalkeith toon in the Cross Keys,
I 'm bound she 'd sworn it was a' lees.
Na, na; her John tae sit an' bouse,
An' keep her lonely in the house;
He micht, when he met an auld cronie,
Sit doon an' tak a glass wi' onie,
But that is a'. Was it e'er heard,
That John did ever break his word?

'T is gude for human sicht an' ken,
That distance lends enchantment then;
Though what hereafter may befa'
May prove a blessing tae us a'.
The wee bit blinks that mak' us glad,
Will jist as soon mak' us stark mad.
Sae it was wi' Bell, as there she sat,
Aye edging roond the simmering pat,
Hoping, dooting, 'midst her sorrow,
What micht be before to-morrow.
That day she had been bizzy brewing,
Jock's supper at the fire was stewing,
A tastie bite as man could wish,
His favourite an' his amous dish.

In auld Dalkeith, Jock's freens forgather,
Tae weet, an' may be, drook their leather;
Tae square an' reckon some amounts,
An' settle a' their year's accounts.
Each had pay'd doon his hinmost boddle,
Syne some curmudgeon, in their noddle,
Had caus'd them a' tae stand a treat,
Their thirsty mou's an' throats tae weet.

Digitized by Google

As each drank oot his reaming bicker,
They shune began tae laugh an' nicher;
It seem'd tae be their earnest prayer
Tae get hauf fou, an' ca' in mair.
Nae doot the day was snell an' cauld,
An' norelan' Boreas blew richt bauld;
The drap hung at the auld year's nose,
Chittering, trying tae warm its toes;
The young year crousely pok'd its nose,
Just blushing like an opening rose.
Sae, thinking there wad be nae ill,
They yoked tae the bapps an' yill;
The stoup pass'd round, the crack grew vauntie,
They were nae lang or they grew cantie,
Aboot ploughs an' horses, mills an' corn,
An' a' they ken'd since they were born.
Even politics an' gospel skreeds,
They touch'd upon their various heads.
The storm ootside micht blaw an' shout,
They were indoors while it was oot;
Jock never thocht tae rise ava,
Nae thochts o' hame for him: na, na.
He had nae got a sullen dame
Tae gloom at him when he wun hame;
She was nae yin tae flyte or bann,
But jist said, yer an awfu' man;
Was ower weal pleas'd tae see him leevin':
Jock ken'd that he was shune forgiven.

Let 's look intae the Cross Keys' spense,
Whaur a' thing is sae trig an' mense,
While merrie cracks an' funny stories,
Mak's the time pass off sae glorious.
Were you tae search the county roon,
Ye could nae find a hoose sae boon;
Noo while they 're seaping at the drauff,
I 'll try an' tak' their photograuff.

At Watty Young's, in the Cross Keys,
Three worthies sat an' supp'd at ease;
They had a' been laddies at the schule,
An' this had been there golden rule,
Where'er they met or did forgether,
In spite o' creeds or wind or weather,
Jist for the sake o' auld langsyne,

Digitized by Google

They 'd meet an' keep auld things in min'.
Watt was an honest, cantie cheil,
Hale o' heart an' true an' leal;
There were but few could fill his place,
As an upricht, decent boniface.
A widower he had been for lang,
An' ne'er wad wed, sae went the sang;
But blest wi' Bess, his only dochter,
He up tae womanhood had brocht her.
Her dimpled face an' smiling ee
Were like the blume on apple tree;
As fair an' sweet as onie gowan,
A trig bit couthie, sonsie woman.
She grew beneath her faither's care,
Sae kind an' simple, sweet an' rare;
Should a wan look ower Watty steal,
She nurs'd him or his heart grew weel.
Her charms had struck the skinny tailor,
He watch'd her as he were her jailor;
She didna' seem tae shun him neither,
But kind o' ways blink'd on him raither;
Which made him maist loup oot his shinn,
An' gaur'd the blood rin through his skin.

Rab Tamson made Jock's graith an' metal,
An' kept them a' in famous fettle;
He was a cronie worth the name,
As e'er blew wind intae a flame.
Fine he could mak' his anvil ringle
Like auld kirk bells, tae tingle tingle.
His muckle, burnt, pudding face,
Had gi'en him sic a worthy grace,
As careering, helchin', there he sat,
Gude nature made him roond an' fat.
His weel fed paunch, whene'er he leugh,
Had burst'd, had it not been teugh.
His lowein' thrapple aye was dry,
He never loot the stoup pass bye.
His brawnie airms were mair like legs—
He needed them when shaeing neigs—
Were cled wi' hair, an' were sae lang,
The cheild micht greive wha got a whang.
An' when he shut his muckle neive,
It was nae jist a mak' believe,
If on the table it thump'd batter,

Digitized by Google

The caups an' stoups they a' play'd clatter ;
The very table shook an' grain'd,
The very kebeck sigh'd an' main'd ;
The bapps grew pale, while, for there sakes,
In flinders flew the aitmeal cakes.
He was nae yin was prood or sulkin',
He had the very sowl o' Vulcan.
Jist let him ken what ye did need,
He could mak' a plough or singe sheep's head.

Pate Stitchie was a lang pike staff,
Or like a man jist spleet in hauf.
His oyster box was lang eneuch
Tae be the cooter o' a pleugh.
His een, like twa weilks in his heed,
Gave him a look o' cunning greed.
A great lang face, an' head the same—
Thin an' pinch'd his hungry wame.
An' athiest in baith words an' looks,
Ye micht blawn a spittle through his chooks.
His fingers lang, an' baney claws,
Lookéd mair like monkeys paws,
Which seem'd as if he own'd the clan
O' beasts, than that o' human man.
His legs were like twa lang claise poles,
His bapp feet frichted a' the moles,
Whither flesh or parchment was his skin,
Wad hae puzzl'd sair the late Darwin.
In fact, he was a shadowy thing,
Had aye some project by the wing,
Brag'd what he could dae an' think,
A very sand-bed, tae, for drink.
Tae tell the truth, his parch'd up wizen
Could stand as much wad droon'd a dizen.
Was fond o' skelpin' gospel raunts,
An' stultifying modest saunts.
Had ne'er been married a' his life,
An' swore he 'd never tak' a wife ;
But noo, far gone wi' barley bree,
He cast ower Bess a langin' ee.
The drink an' cakes had a' run dune—
She jist had brocht a fresh stock in—
Had bade them a' tak' tent an' care,
She thocht they didna' need nae mair ;
Jock prais'd her for her carefu' hint,

Digitized by Google

But said they didna' mean tae stint.
The tailor said she needna' flyte
For him, he didna' care a doit,
For she, nor priest, nor onie man,
Sae lang as he could speak or stan'.
She needna' think the bank had stoppit,
He had lots o' siller in his pocket;
An' when that pickle was ran doon,
There were lots o' mair in Embro' toon.
She turn'd on him a look sae gracious,
He felt the charm sae sweet an' precious,
His very heart geid dunt on dunt,
In fact it was a perfect lunt—
Glowing up wi' a perfect fire,
His first impulse had turn'd desire.
The stitchie prais'd her winsome charms,
Syne clasp'd the lassie in his arms.
His nose sae point'd, lang, an' thin —
A shapeless piece o' girse an' skin—
An' red. Hangin' aye at it was a drap,
Weal mix'd wi' snuff an' barley sap.
She seiz'd him by 't, geid it a pull
As nearly drew it oot his skull;
Which taen auld stitch'm sae tae book
As made him draw a sheepish look,
An' splutter'd something gey uncommon
Aboot the devilish heart o' woman.
The tears ran hailing doon his cheeks—
In truth, he nearly sp'ilt his breeks.
The lave sett up a great gauffaa,
Ye micht hae tied them wi' a straw;
They laugh'd an' hoasted mair an' mair
Until their sides were aching sair,
While Jock cried oot, Weel dune, weel dune:
That 's richt, pake weel his sapless skin.

Beside them sat gleg Souter Davie,
Slyly nicknam'd 'Pouch the Gravie.'
Though boots an' shoon the bodie made,
He was a fiddler, tae, by trade.
It was rapture when ye heard him sing,
It was heaven when he touch'd the string.
Sometime before, at Dalkeith Hoose,
The servants had been blythe an' croose,
At the age-coming o' its heir—

Digitized by Google

Of coorse the snab was fiddler there;
Had play'd sae weel an' drank sae stoot,
Scarce kennin' what he was aboot.
He stow'd a sheep's leg in his hat,
Wi' a' the sundries, bree, an' fat.
I'll leave ye for tae guess an' ken
The sorry plicht he was in then.
Of coorse the neebors, ilk ane, kent it,
Syne he was sadly sair tormented;
He did nae mind there jeers—not he,
Mair than the biteing o' a flea.
A cheerfu' heart a' thing it mellows—
He was the wale o' hearty fellows.
A kirn or wedding wasna' richt
Unless they had the fiddler ticht.
His fame was kenn'd baith far an' near,
At Hallowmass an' the New Year.
He was aye shure some jobs tae hae,
An' oft-times mair than he could dae.
He was a wee, tee-totam mannie,
An' had been brocht up wi' his grannie.
His big red head was fou o' knowledge,
Giff as he 'd been at Dublin College.
A famous wrangler—nae professor
Could toss his head like Davie Messor.
Hauf fou, he whiles got gey uproarious,
He had sic a pack o' sangs an' stories.
A better gouldie ne'er was kent—
His shoon wad wear frae Lent tae Lent.
He kept the biggin' in a roar,
An' aye the lave cried oot, encore,
Syne drank untae his health an' sang,
An' aye they hoped he wad live lang.
He was jist as blythe tae dae 't again.
Wee rosettie was sae fidgin' fain,
Thrang tearing at the hearty chorus,
They didna' mind the wintry Boreas.
They ne'er before had sat sae late:
Was it the drink, or was it fate
That made them sit sae lang an' chatter—
An' aye the yill was brewing better.
Whiles the snab was staunch teetotal,
An' shudder'd at the name o' bottle;
At times he wadna' drink nae mair
Then jist tae steep his leather fair,

Digitized by Google

At other times took sic a load
As micht hae soom'd an Iceland cod.
This was ae nicht amang the lave,
In which he swam the barley wave;
He seem'd intent tae dae far mair
Than onie ither mortal there.
His tumbler an' his wuzard tricks
Had fairly knock'd the rest tae sticks.
The bodie fairly had forgotten—
He lookit like a hauf-droon'd rotten;
But he tell'd aye the tither storie,
Which kept them on the point o' glory,
An' laugh did they; the landlord's sell,
Geid monie a skirril an' a yell;
His face as red 's a nor-wast moon
Wi' hotchin', on the flure fell doon.
Ilk tale was funnier than another,
In fact it was a perfect smother,
O wit, an' mirth, an' frolic fine,
Which made the hoors pass off divine.
Jock leugh, an' cried oot, 'Clean Dae-keith,
His gapeing mooth show'd a' his teeth.
The very tailor, aye sae kittle,
Was nearly chokit wi' a spittle.
Was neither fit tae speak nor stand,
But grasp'd the table wi' ilk hand;
He pech'd, he blew, snirted an' hoasted,
The same as his reason he had lost it.
Rab Tamson, he could dae nae mair
Than hotch an' haud his airm chair;
At last he sputter'd oot, gey bravie,
Aye, but ye 're a wee deevil, Davie.
An' stanin' laughin', looking bright,
Was Bess, wha thocht they were a' gyte.
Wee rosettie-ends, ower yill an' whiskey,
Had play'd them sic a blythsome plisky.
The Vulcan, helpless as a bairn,
Said he maun drink tae cool his airn.
Their lugs an' sides were sae weel rax'd,
Wattie geid them whate'er they axed;
He stood the treat a hearty jorum,
Dranк lang life tae the leasome quorum.
Turn'd roond tae Davie, an' he says,
He ne'er laugh'd sae in a' his days.
By jing, but ye 're a hearty blade,

Digitized by Google

Lang may ye live an' ha'e gude trade!
As for blythe Jock, he didna' doot 'im,
He kenn'd nae what they'd dae without 'im;
Sae gleesome had they been a' nicht,
Sae friendly an' sae staunch an' ticht,
He had nae tongue tae blame nor praise,
But wish'd him heaven an' happy days.
Wi' that the smith cried oot, Weel done,
Ye 've prov'd yersell yer faither's son.
Hoo fine, Jock King, ye draw the moral,
Yer brain has shurely turn'd tae coral;
But gude keep me, ye draw it fine,
That 's gospel every word an' line.

Jock, man, it 's years—'t is gey an' lang—
Since last I heard ye sing a sang;
Ye used tae pipe a blythsome lilt,
Sae claw yer lug an' yoke ye till 't.
A sang, quo' Jock, I ne'er could dae it,
I cannie sing, I 'm far ower blaeit.
Wi' that the stitchie turn'd him roon,
'T is mysell that 's heard ye gi'e a tune;
Jist wat yer happer wi' the yill,
Ye 'll hae a verse tae gi'e us still.
Yes, yes, they cried, if but ae verse,
Ye needna' mind though ye be herse.
Jock could na' thole them langer pressing,
Sae, thinking he wad be transgressing,
His thochts they turn'd awa tae hame,
Whaur sits his weary, waiting dame!

JOCK'S SANG.

Kindest wife in a' creation,
Bonniest wife in a' the nation,
Blythest wife in onie station.
Rise an' let me in, O!

Rise, oh, rise, my ain kind dearie,
Aye, Bell, I 'm cauld an' wearie,
Aye, Bell, I 'm flyed an' earie.
Rise an' let me in, O!

A' the lang nicht I thocht on thee,
Hoo dowie an' lanely ye wad be;
A' the lang nicht—nicht,
A' the lang nicht;
Weel that cowes a', it winna clink.
Dass 't, I hae lost a link!

Digitized by Google

Jock tried tae get the words tae suit,
Some way they wadna' hammer oot—
He tried his verse, but could nae mair
Sing oot his sang than flee in air.
No bad ava, they a' cried roon—
Man, Jock, what 's put ye oot o' tune:
Hoots, man, Jock, tried ower again.
Na, na, quo' Jock, it 's a' in vain,
Feint a link will clink thegither,
I 'm in a swither a' throughither.
When Bessie stappit in, an' said,
The storm ootside was lown an' laid.
Thank ye, my lassie, Jockie cried,
Tell Jim tae get the beast ootside;
But see it gets its beans an' corn,
An' I 'll gi'e him a swanking horn.
An' here 's a present, bonnie Bessie,
Mind keep it tae yersell my lassie,
It i 'll buy some ribbons for yer hair,
Or snaps or gingebread at the fair;
An' mind when yer at Embro' toon,
First time, tae gey us a look roon.
Ye 's get a welcome, I 'm gey shure,
An' you 'll see my young son an' heir;
Oor Bell's fair daft aboot the laddie,
A sonsie cheil, jist like his daddie.
An' noo the best o' freens maun quit—
I cannie, wull nae, langer sit.

'T is strange what fancies fill our brain,
How pleasure oft brings greatest pain;
Even at the court where all is show,
Vain pleasure gives the greatest blow.
The very monarch stands aghast,
Staring at pleasure fleeting past;
The beggar wallowing in his low career,
Gets drunk until he quakes with fear;
A host of reptiles through it crawls,
Until it satiates, sours, and palls.
The pearly dew-drops, ere the day 's begun,
Fades into nothing before the radiant sun;
See frantic parents lamenting wild,
Their pleasure was their buried child;
The heart-spoken beam that shone in lover's eyes,
Oft turns to spite and envy ere the other dies.

Google

Deceitful fancies crowd upon their train,
Where all was bliss is only spleen and pain;
Vain earthly pleasure 's but an empty bubble,
'T is all we gain for our great pains and trouble.
True pleasure is the charm wisdom teaches,
The goal man longs for, which he seldom reaches;
Hope's flattering promises are terrors now,
While witching pleasure withers on our brow.
For why should joy with us forever dwell,
Pleasures our pain, past weakness bane of hell,
The brightened spells in fragments break,
Then pass like moonlight from a lake;
'T is but the tinted rainbow's hue,
Or globe of sparkling, pearly dew.

Jock in dreamland seem'd fairly lost,
Or else his mind was tempest toss'd;
You 'll find yersell in sic a plicht
You 'll no be venturing hame th' nicht?
Hame! will I no; whate'er betide
I will gang hame—can I no ride?
Nae doot; but hearken hoo it blaws,
The biggin' shakes—forbye it snaws;
Ye 'll bide a' nicht, ye's get a bed,
Besides, the dramocks in yer head;
An' ye 'll ride ower the morn as well,
Syne mak' it richt an' square wi' Bell;
Jist tell her it was me that kept ye,
The nicht 's sae coorse, she 'll ne'er expect ye;
Sae Wattie fleetch'd, but a' in vain,
Jock's will was purpos'd an' his ain.
Weel Watt, I thank ye unco weel,
But what wad Bell no think an' feel.
Hame I maun gang, though at my heels
The cluds should snaw auld wives an' deils—
Though a' the hail an' wind on yirth
Should blaw me richt oot ower the firth,
I'm bound tae gang; an' noo, I doot
Puir Bell will hae a blae look oot.
Weel, weel, ye ken what suits ye best,
But John, ye micht for ance be prest,
Think on the road ye hae tae gaun,
An' be advised, my honest man;
It 's getting late, I 'll drink nae mair,
Forbye the nicht is gey an' fair,

Digitized by Google

It 's time that I was gain' hame
Untae my kind an' couthie dame.

Hech, me ! but ye 're a useless taupie,
Rab Tamson said, an' wink'd at Wattie.
Hame ! an' leave us here, sic social fellows,
Vulcan blew oot frae his big bellows.
Hame ! man, Jock, but ye 're a silly coof,
No worth that spittle i' my loof ;
Na, na, my cock, we 'll hae anither—
Jock King, I lo'e ye as a brither.
See, there 's my loof, I lo'e ye weel,
Sit doon again my cantie cheil.
The smith ca'd in a reaming bicker
Jist tae mak' them ticht an' sicker ;
The wee bit sparkie in his throat
Was getting white, near welding hot.
Jock, ye 'll taste wi' me, for I am able
Tae ken what's what across the table ;
Let 's drink success tae next year's trade,
It 's lang since yer first breeks I made.
An' drink wi' me, the gouldie said
Wha thinks or speaks on gain' tae bed
An' us sae joyful, blythe, and gled.
Sae doon again the miller sat,
An' cheer'd them wi' his pleasant chat,
Ne'er thinking on the lea lang gate
Which near micht end his days an' fate.

At length Jock jump'd up at last,
Was naething daunted by the blast,
Nor a' the deils in the creation,
Nor bogles o' the Scottish nation :
Hame had for him sae monie joys,
He fair forgot rude winter's noise,
Drew ower his breeks his worsted hose,
An' syne the sturdie billie rose ;
Row'd a gude gravat roond his neck
Tae keep baith cauld an' croups in check ;
Hustled on his strong drab coat,
Buttoned close up tae the throat—
Drew on his head a dug-skin cap,
Tied roond his ears a cosie hap,
As refuge 'gainst the blast an' snaw,
An' the snell wind that lood did blaw.

Digitized by Google

Wish'd bonnie Bessie bliss an' licht,
Syne stapp'd oot intae the nicht,
Where his blythe filly, wi' a flicher,
Greeted him wi' a welcome nicher.
Beneath Jock's elbuck pok'd its head,
They were the best o' freends indeed.
He sprang intae the saddle then,
An honest cheil, the wale o' men.
Jim held the lantren flaming up
Tae let them fill his stirrup cup;
Drank tae their healths in hearty chorus,
Wi' freendly grip an' dochan-dorus.
The group took up the last refrain,
Drank Jock's an' Bell's a' ower again,
Shook hands a' roond, wish 'd him gude speed,
Haith, they had muckle cause tae dae'd!
While Bessie waved her hand, an' nodded,
Nae shade o' woe their minds foreboded.
Syne he bade them a' gude nicht,
An' sune he canter'd oot o' sicht.

Little they thocht, when pairting there,
That they micht never see Jock mair;
Or that some fleg o' cantrip slicht
Was tae gi'e Jockie sic a fricht—
Wad scaur him a' his lea lang days,
Change his hale life an' vauntie ways.

Jock soon began, as hameward riding,
Tae tak' a view o' his backsliding;
But soon dang ower the wee remonstra,
As glive began tae view the contra.
The wind micht blaw, the snaw micht fa',
Jock didna' care a single straw;
Nae thochts had he o' dool or sadness,
His were a very stream o' gladness.
The cracks were rinning in his brain,
Forbye the yill had made him fain—
A bodie maun get fou' at times,
An' boosing 's no the warst o' crimes.
I dinna fear the creed a spittle
That winna let a man tak' tipple;
I dinna owe a single groat,
Sae a' the lave can go tae pot.
If honesty makes an honest cheil,

Digitized by Google

Then I wadna' cheat the very deil;
An' here 's a drap tae weet my wuzen,
I wadna' ca' the king my cousin;
I 'm come o' kings, I 'm King by name,
Gude sooth, that blaws o' muckle fame;
My auld forbears were honest men,
An' aye could keep a butt an' ben;
I 'm near haun gyte, I cannie help it,
Sae Jock thocht, as alang he skelpit;
Bending his shouthers tae the blast,
Howling oot the snell nor'-waust,
Which came wi' sic a sough an' swirril
As made Jock's nose an' fingers dirril.
The very filly sneez'd an' snorted
As roond its head the snaw-flakes sported,
Making a dreich an' tiresome plod,
An' maistly blocking up the road.

Fou dearly Bell lo'ed her ain Jock,
An angry word he never spoke;
He ne'er had gi'en her a sour look,
For gloom nor care he could nae brook.
Saying that morning, as he rode away,
He would be hame by close o' day;
Shure tae be hame that afternoon,
Bringing her gown an' bairnies' shoon.
Noo what could keep him oot sae late,
Was putting her in sic a state;
The drifting snaw, it flew like stoor,
In fact it was a perfect smoor.
The sky owercast wi' leaden cluds,
An' eerie moan'd the rifted wudds;
It was sic a nicht, as wraiths an' deils
Micht weel be capering on their heels.
Something uncannie was in the air—
My! hoo the storm did howl an' rair!

As Jock cam' roond by the deer park,
Wow, but the nicht was drear an' dark;
He soon began his boast tae doot,
An' wish'd he had na' spoke sae stoot,
When he an' Wattie sat sae crouse.
But noo regrets were little use,
As galloping ower by Dander Haa
Amidst a blattering hash o' snaw,

Digitized by Google

The very drift his een holes fills,
As he scuds past by auld Tod-Hills.
Has reach'd Camp-end, the storied regions,
Whaur sleeps the dust o' Pictish legions;
Has swept like drift whaur lies the Roman—
Good soldier brave, and pretty woman;
Has post'd on tae Simmer Side,
Whaur winter 's spreading far an' wide;
Nae gleam o' licht was in the lift,
But howls, an' moans, an' hail, an' drift.
Got safe whaur Haco's tinkler crew,
Twa dozen o' maidens ruthless slew;
Whaur, bending in the winter's breeze,
Like ghosts appeared the very trees.
By Fernieside, he went like stoor,
An' left behind him dreich Craigoor.
Noo, dashes past the haunt'd cairn,
Whaur hauf-hang'd Maggie burk'd her bairn.
Leaves far behind him Pentecost,
'Midst storm an' the darkness lost;
Went bounding through the Howe o' Flanders,
Whaur monie an elfin weirdly wanders;
An' safely pass'd across the ford,
Whaur blear-e'ed Peter, wi' his sword,
In days when justices's were few,
A very reverend preacher slew.
A welcome sicht it was tae see,
Jock sigh'd, an' pass'd Queen Mary's tree.
Drew rein as he near'd Little France,
Nor did he look the least askance,
But prim'd him wi' some usquebae,
Tae help him for tae take the brae—
Thinking he wad soon be hame,
Beside his wearie, waiting dame.

Weel, I 'm a fule, tae drink sae stoot,
An' sae monie murderers gaun aboot—
Wha kens but I micht meet my death,
An' here be robb'd o' a' my graith.
I hae got snug an' safe my siller;
I 'm proud 's a king, though I 'm a miller.
Jock was at Craigs, close by the road
Which led untae his ain abode—
Jist at the turn, his filly shied,
A hundred howlets shriek'd an' cried.

Digitized by Google

Jock's heart stood still, an' syne it dunted—
I wonder gin Craigmillar's haunted;
Taw; it's maybe jist some cantrip whim,
Tauld by that gomeral, Geordie Sim.
His head 'ill hae been in a trunk,
Some nicht when he was gey an' drunk—
Tae speak o' things I never saw,
I'll let that flea stick tae the wa'.

His filly was the best o' naigs,
As ere went roond aboot the Craigs—
Pricking on through heichs an' howes,
For Duddingston an' Cairntowes.
Jock tried tae think—was meditating
On his ain wife sae lanely waiting—
Wondering what she'd dae or say,
For he had been sae lang away.
Ha, steady my woman! what's wrang wi' ye noo?
Ye're no gaun tae reest? we'll shune be through.
When sic a blast o' wind did blaw,
They baith were blinded wi' the snaw,
Which came wi' sic a sough an' swirril—
The very hoolets stop'd their skirril—
Same as the fiends were a' abroad,
Till Jock thocht he had tint his road.
Said he, when he could draw his breath,
I'm nearly chok'd, as shure as death—
My gracious, but I'm in a plicht!
It's noo maist middle o' the nicht.
When sic a brazen trump was heard—
Jock an' his filly were baith scaur'd—
The filly baith did shy an' rear,
Jock tae his swutch, an' curse an' swear;
He scarce could keep upon his seat,
His naig wi' froth an' foam did sweat,
Syne stood stock still, nor mov'd a fit,
But seemed riveted untae the bit;
On ilka hand a sulphury crater,
Where jump'd an ugly imp or sayter.
Jock through the mirk did scanin' look—
His frichted filly trembling shook—
A muckle form loom'd in the air,
Ae moment seen, then seen nae mair;
It scrieved sae scaur'd, look'd sae eldritch,
Scraich'd laigh like some vile faiket witch;

Digitized by Google

Made sic a hubbub an' commotion,
Like breakers on the surging ocean.
Then Jock began tae groose an' shake,
His hair on end, his heart tae quake;
But, quickly screwing up his courage,
Straucht on he went, 'gainst a' demurrage,
Determined life an' cash tae save—
For he was bold, as weel as brave.
Grippin' his swutch hard by the heft,
Glowerin' tae richt hand an' tae left—
But feint a thing he heard or saw,
Save soughs o' trees, an' flakes o' snaw;
Till, thinkin' he had been mista'en,
He blew his nose, an' slacken'd rein,
Rax'd himsel' up, leugh fair ootricht,
Till echo rang again that nicht.
Hech; I'll be the better o' a drappie;
Weel, I'm a gyped, feckless tappie.
Haith, this cowes a'—this comes o' drinkin'—
What! my sang; is yon a licht that's blinkin'?
When through the mirk and gloom o' nicht,
It was then he spied a flaming licht—
It flash'd, it gleam'd, it look'd sae rare,
It shot far up through the dank air,
While sounds o' mirthful revelry,
Roos'd Jock's distracted chivalry.
His courage rose, the weir'd music
Made him as though he couldna sit
Upon his saddle hauf a meen'it,
Or he had broke the spell an' seen it;
The very earth an' air seem'd fou o''t,
Jock felt as if he were fill'd fou o''t;
An' aye the soond cam doon the brae,
An' aye the soond went upwards tae.
Noo, he didna care for life nor siller—
What was gaun on within Cragmillar
He was determined he wad see;
Gett; he didna care a single flea
For a' the bogles in the warld;
Jock's caution on the winds was hurl'd.

The music ceas'd, Jock drew his rein,
But shune the bands were playin' again.
'T is an auld sayin', baith strange an' queer,
Speak o' the de'il an' he 's shure tae appear—

Digitized by Google

Though Geordie Sim's a muckle drouth,
I'm thinkin' he has tell'd the truth;
Its no a' lees, nor cantrips neither—
But, bless me! its sic awfu' weather.
Had this been Halloeen's bogle nicht
There micht ha'e been some cantrip slicht;
But cantrips here, or cantrips there,
By gosh! there's music in the air—
I hear the big bass fiddle bummin',
An', by the powers! there's some ane drummin'.
But, hark! aboon the big drum's swell,
I hear a soond I ken richt well—
Yes; I could lay a ten-pound note,
That I did hear the clarion's throat.
The bagpipes tae, liest what a stir,
Faith, they are playin' a lusty birr.
Sic time o' nicht their trumpets blawing—
Whaur tae peace can they be gauing;
Unless tae Jock's Lodge, at Piershill—
But syne that wad be stranger still;
Dod, it's maybe sodgers on the mairch—
Na; the soond comes frae Craigmillar's airch.
Tuts, I'm shurely daft or dreamin'—
Losh! wasna yon some wild-fire gleamin';
It maybe was some evil speerit—
Gude troth, I think I'm fair deleerit.
Ah, weel, whate'er it was I canna tell—
Eh, what! isna that a brumstane smell?
Brumstane, a-weel—I weel may laugh,
I'm jist a fossey drucken cauf.
What's putten brumstane in my heid?—
Wha smells at brumstane but the deid?
Brumstane; ha! ha! faith, I declare
It chokes an' fills the very air;
'T is neither mair nor less than this,
That 's set my heid in sic a bizz.
I've haen sae monie whims an' fancies,
They've come an' went like midges' dances.
The drink's a dune—I'm cauld an' wearie—
Nae wunder then I feel sae earie;
A puir benichted sowl am I—
The very bottle's clean rin dry.
Weel, here I'm at Craigmillar noo—
There's nae mistake there's some a-do
Gaun on within the Castle wa's:

Digitized by Google

Hear hoo that herald trumpet blaws.
I'll see 't mysel'; I dinna care
Tho' the de'il an' a' his frien's are there.

Ah, reckless man! ere hame he got,
That sicht tae him was dearly bought.
'T is nae use sayin' yer shune or late—
Man, shune or late, maun meet his fate;
It 's a hotchy potchy a'thegither,
The end is maybe axe or teyther.

De-Blinker and Craigmillar's dochter
Had lang been kent tae be in love;
De-Blinker, he had won an' coft 'er—
The baron did her choice approve.
This was the nicht—the gatherin' great—
The nicht o' their betrothal,
When Craigmillar wad be seen in state,
Wi' a' sae blyth an' jovial.

Frae a bow window in the north,
The flaming licht cam' streaming forth.
When Jock arrived upon the scene
He scarcely could believe his een—
Nae place for mortal man tae be,
Nae sicht for mortal man tae see;
Sae sumptuous was the great ha' dress't,
Sae braw an' proud each stately guest.
Bewilder'd, there he sat an' stared,
Ne'er heedin' hoo the tempest rair'd.
It was a heazing feast indeed—
O' lang kail, cabbage, and sheep's heid,
Mountains o' kebecks, cakes, an' scones,
While a' the gaudy side-boords groans
Wi' junks o' beef an' huge mince pies,
An' drinks o' every kind an' dyes;
Great cabbages were steaming hot,
While chappit tatties frae the pot—
Ower which the cooks made sic a wammel—
Wi' nice prime bits o' Sandie Cammel.
A great boar's heid grinn'd on a platter,
Deck'd oot wi' sweets and pastry batter;
While, tae stap their mou's and greed,
Were swanking plates o' crappen heid;
Wi' oysters, new drawn frae the Firth—

Digitized by Google

The finest an' the best on yirth;
Wi' silvery herrin' an' white skate,
Forbye a strugeon, grim an' great;
An' speckled troot, lang eels, an' sa'mon,
An' pikes, fresh frae the Howe o' Cramon';
While spunes an' dishes—sic a clatter—
Made Jockie's mou' grow wearsh, an' water.
A great prize ox was roasted hale;
O' sheep, a score—the very wale;
Dumplin's an' puddin's were a' there,
An' pastry titt-bits, nice an' rare;
Big puncheons o' baith rum an' whisky,
Tae gar them loup, an' mak' them frisky;
Besides, for fear their strength should fail,
They drank frae barrels o' strong ale,
Till bed-rid hags, like slippery eels,
Coors'd roond aboot on caperin' heels;
They reel'd, they cross'd, jink'd, an' yell'd,
An' skirl'd as if they were beein' fell'd;
They jumped an' they gamboll'd sae,
Till Jock's kind heart for them grew wae.
The flunkies flutter'd oot an' in;
The hale place shook an' reel'd wi' din;
The bon-fire blazed wi' fiercesome glare,
While monie a globe an' lamp were there;
At each end hung a chandelier,
Whase lichts were burning bricht an' clear.

Ne'er since Craigmillar had been built,
Never had it been sae weel fill't—
Magicians, wizards, warlocks, witches,
An' taids an' snakes oot a' the ditches
The countryside for miles aroon',
While some had come straucht frae the moon;
Wi' jackalls, wolves, an' monie a baudron,
Had a' come frae the coast o' Sautron;
Wi' murderer's graith, an' gibbet chains—
Jock's blude fair curdled in his veins;
Wi' monie a centipede frae hell—
Forbye expectin' Auld Nick's sel'.
They werena shure he was awa'
Wanderin' through some Australian shaw,
Shootin' cockatoos an' parrots,
Houkin' bykes, an' eatin' carrots.
But, jist tae shew he had been minded,

Digitized by Google

They telegraph'd; an' sune he signded,
Tae let them ken he was a' square—
There was nae mistake, he wad be there.
It was his shadow had Jock frichted,
When doon by Craigs he was benichted;
Yon time his filly swat an' shook.
The de'il had sic an awesome look
As he appear'd wi' a' his legions,
Swank an' trim frae southern regions.
He was a most imposin' sight—
Of lofty an' majestic height;
An' yet, altho' a fallen star,
A god alike in peace or war.
Profusely deck'd with costly splendour,
In kingly robes of dazzling grandeur;
A brow without a thought or care,
A face that beam'd supremely fair.
In fact, so debonair an' civil,
You ne'er would think it was the devil;
Wi' monie a trophie o' the year,
Fresh frae the sunny hemisphere.

A lang usher, wi' a garrish lip,
Had jist announced his great de'ilship;
The trumpets soonded when he entered—
His was the form whence all eyes centred;
The female sex all curtsied low,
The male gender did bowin' go.
The de'il salaam'd, smil'd, look'd sublime,
Was glad tae ken he was in time;
Drank a' their healths in ruddie wine,
An' hop'd their sports wad never tine.
Had rare sport at the antipods—
Sic sport as only pleased the gods;
Hookin', whaupin' pike an' sa'mon,
On the Pim-paw an' River Yawmon.
The betroth'd pair were introduced,
But sic a change as it produced—
He wi' the eleeted pair shook hands,
Then waited on the baron's commands,
Wi' sic a grace an' sic an air,
Which captivated a' were there;
Swellin' wi' rapture an' wi' pride,
The baron set Nick by his side.
Nick kent sae fine tae set his snare,

Digitized by Google

He was aye shure tae catch his hare.
Upon a dais the cronies sat,
Haein' a confidential chat;
Nick drank it in wi' greedy ear,
Cast on the bride a knowing leer;
She felt a pang within her start,
The thrill had nestled in her heart;
Her neck an' cheeks grew red wi' blushes,
She trembled like tae aspen bushes.
De-Blinker's heir, wi' jealous eye,
The leerin' look did quickly spy—
What were his thochts I needna tell,
He kept them smother'd tae himsel';
Wi' burnin' rage he did respire—
Revenge was noo his hale desire.

The baron gave a nod, rose up,
Then call'd on each tae fill their cup,
Tae drink the health of mighty Nick,
An' see they did it clean an' quick—
He was their chief, he was their king,
In fact he was their everything;
An' he or she who disobey'd,
That moment alive they wad be flay'd.

Hip, hip, hurrah! they drank it oot,
Then after that each look'd sae stoot;
Nae thochts had they o' dool or sadness,
Their's was a splore o' mirth an' madness;
They were a' sae ta'en wi' Clootie's daein's,
They smil'd an' whisper'd monie sayin's.

Next, in his turn, his de'ilship rose—
One toast, my lieges, I here propose,
The healths o' this betrothed pair;
He said he jist wad sae nae mair,
But wish them life an' length o' days,
An' aye a richt gude faggot's blaze;
An' he or she that wadna drink it,
May their e'e in sleep be never blinket.
Each glass was turn'd doon side up,
Tae prove that each had drain'd their cup.
'T is weel, he said; noo for a dance,
I lang tae see my kins-folk prance.

Digitized by Google

Nick made three signs upon the air,
When a souple imp appeared there;
He look'd jist like a flake o' flim,
He was sae sprichtly, swank, an' slim.
My lieges an' minions, here you see
The master o' the cere-monee;
I had a job tae snare an' catch him—
There 's not another imp can match him.
This phantom in his pouches grop 't,
A kick-shaw on the flure he drop 't,
Made a grand flourish an' lood yell;
Then bade the band their coorses swell,
Tae see their traups were a' in trim.
Syne after they had pleas'd him—
For it was like a country fair—
A' kinds o' music he had there.
High on a platform they sat,
Piping sharp and blawin' flat.
He stamp'd wi' his foot, an' then
Echo re-echoed it back again;
Screivin' at it, harum-scaurum,
Raisin' a maist dire alaurrum;
Shakin' a' the wa's an' pillars,
Sinkin' through the caves an' cellars,
Where pris'ners doom'd for ever wail'd,
Wi' ne'er a chance to be oot-bail'd;
The very bats an' hoolets shook,
As doon upon the scene they look.

The membrane imp wav'd high his hand,
Next bowed unto the mŏtley band.
His jump'd-up airs micht scaurr'd a sooter,
He strutted like a full-blawn pooter;
Gave an ahem! noo, are you ready,
Then let us march by lord an' leddy.
His haughty pride fir'd a' his face,
As each pair deftly took their place:
De-Blinker an' his bride led off,
The deevil gave a wee bit cough.
The band struck up "Garb o' Auld Gaul,"—
This was the openin' o' the ball.
In a grand, majestic, marchin' style
They swept along 'neath crypt an' aisle.
Some gentry o' the baboon kind,
Wha had an uppish turn o' mind,

Digitized by Google

Mongrels o' the monkey tribe,
Wi' neither decency nor pride;
They bein' raither short o' stature,
Thinkin' they micht mak' it greater,
In every corner o' the wa'
Wherever they could fix a claw,
Fechtin', snarlin', for possession,
In honor of the grand procession,
Climb'd up an' stared, an' grinn'd, an' gap'd,
An' a' the strange contortions aped;
Pointed at everything they saw,
Syne skirrl'd oot a lood harrauh,
While each ane open'd wide its meith,
Syne clos'd them, showin' a' their teeth.

Meanwhile they march wi' sweepin' trains,
Untae the maist unearthly strains;
If some ane stamp'd the ithers heels,
It was then they prov'd that they were de'ils.
But still for a', though dense the crood,
Before the de'il an' baron they boo'd,
Syne pass'd wi' haughty head an' breast,
Tae shew hoo weel they a' were dress't.
Roond an' roond they swept amain,
Booin' an' beckin' ower again,
Until their heels began tae kittle,
Langin' for tae try their mettle,
Till three lood thuds upon the flure
Dismiss'd them a' tae form or chair,
When each partook o' a refresher,
Tae keep the steam up tae high pressure;
That was a job as tired the flunkies,
They had tae fecht baboons an' monkeys.

Each heart was boundin' wi' delicht,
In hopes o' a maist glorious nicht.
De-Blinker seem'd tae be a' grace—
A smile beamed on his leddy's face.

Lang Nell was ken't, an' fear'd, by a'—
Whate'er she said or wished was law.
She was the baron's only bairn,
Her mither dee'd as she was born.
She ramp'd an' raged as she were gyte,
A paragon tae swear an' flyte;

Digitized by Google

A bold, determin'd, wanton wench,
Wi' cheek enough tae fricht the French.
Her faither was a grizzled man,
Wi' scarce the power tae bless or bann;
Jist geid his dochter her ain way,
An' scarcely kenn'd the nicht frae day.
She an' the steward manag'd a' thing,
An' gobl'd 'twixt them mony a braw thing.
She geid her orders, he obeyed,
An' was by his young mistress sway'd;
She wadna bend a nail nor yield,
She aye was victor o' the field.
She had vowed tae be De-Blinker's wife,
An' live a chaste an' happy life;
Sae they agreed by reciprocation
Tae issue a great invitation
Tae their acquaintance, far an' near,
At auld Craigmillar, tae cake an' beer,
The nicht that they were baith betroth'd,
Though in his heart he hated, loath'd,
An' often thocht he wad decline
Tae Nell, she was sae masculine.
He jist admired the wide estate,
That was his love, an' it was great;
Tae hae a wife, it was sae common,
He would not be ruled by any woman:
Not he, while he stood in his briches,
Neither by she nor by her riches.
Jist wait a little; ho, ho, ho!
He grinned, an' chuckl'd very low.

Nick ken't richt weel which way the wind blew,
Had fathom'd a' his mind had seen 't through;
Syne leer'd on Nell a lovin' wink,
Which made the saucy limmer think
That she was blest o' woman kind,
Though she was fickle as the wind;
Tae be notic'd by his de'ilship so,
Had set her brain in sic a glow,
Till lang before or ere she ken't it,
She felt as she were fair demented.
Sidelin's her e'e tae Nick aye turnin',
A somethin' wild within her burnin';
Langin' an' gaspin' ower the chance
O' Nick tae ask her up tae dance.

Digitized by Google

An' faith she hadna lang tae wait,
Till Nick appear'd baith trim and nait.
He boo'd, he smiled, an' syne the de'il
Had ask'd her wad she like a reel;
He said he was a wee thing spavie,
But thocht he micht trip "Dainty Davie."
She put her gentry hand in his,
The hale place seem'd tae reel an' biz!
The very stanes o' wa' an' flure
Nearly rent wi' sheer despair.
Dumbfoonder'd there De-Blinker stood,
Through his veins coors'd a' his blood;
Pressed his heart an' swore an oath,
Ground his teeth an' sneer'd at both.

The sport an' fun had grown sae rare,
The membrane tumbl'd through the air,
Stood on the tips o' his lang taes,
Then wi' his clairinet voice, he says,—
Come yin, come a', an' jine the reel,
Play "Killicrankie" tae please the de'il.
Then ilka lordie wi' his ladye
Were up an' on the flure an' ready,
Waitin' till the imp should give
The signal an' the magic wave.
Tae "Killicrankie" ower the flare,
They kick'd oot their legs richt rare.
The orchestra went tripple quick,
In honor o' his de'ilship, Nick;
An' sic a dancin' there they gatt,
Till some fell swoon'd, an' ithers swatt.
They jigged in, they doobled oot,
Syne pell-mell ran like norlan' noot;
The very fire flew up an' flared.
De-Blinker's een far redder glared,
As his betroth'd an' Signor Nick
Spun roond like lichtning flashing quick;
Wi' achin' sides an' want o' breath,
The rest had maistly got their death.
The dancers a' were swaurf'd or fell'd,
Hurrah! hurrah! the baboons yell'd;
Wi' micht an' main, wi' wind an' thairms,
The band baith blew an' jerk'd their airms.
Still hadding at it, firm an' ticht,
Nick an' his pairtner flew like licht;

Digitized by Google

They had the flure-head tae themsells,
She envied by the breathless belles,
When Nick, before that she could wiss,
Had clapp'd upon her lips a kiss.
It was sae lood, that the report
Went off like cannon frae a fort;
The trumpets blew sae lood a strain,
The auld biggan shook an' reel'd again.
The assembly clapp'd their hands, an' cried,—
Bravo, great king! long live the bride!
Nick fill'd a goblet flowing o'er,
An' then by everything he swore,
No, never had he, in a' his life,
E'er seen or danced wi' sic a wife!
Had he no been sae auld a loot,
He micht hae put De-Blinker oot.
Syne frae the wine cup gently sips,
Then press'd it tae his pairtner's lips,
Whispered something in her ear
Which she was nae loth tae hear;
The spell had wrocht, the die was cast,
Noo she was his, baith firm an' fast.
Nick spann'd her waist, an' slyly kiss'd her,
For a' the lave he wadna miss'd her;
Prais'd her wee mou' an' sparklin' een,
Syne told her she should been a queen;
Drap'd some mair souther in her ear,
She blush'd, an' cried, Be quiet, oh, dear!

De-Blinker scowled, an' stood aloof,—
Aye, but he was a vengeful coof;
Maybe he didna look ferocious,
An' twirl'd up his lang moustacios.
His faither was Sir Hugh De-Blinker,
A thriftless, worthless, thievin' tinker,
A rogue, a rake, a Border riever,
A cut-throat and a gay deceiver.
His wife eloped an' left the savage
Tae spend her life wi' Humphrey Baa-vage.
Had been at some place far abroad,
An' brocht hame sins a fearfu' load;
Syne left his son tae fecht wi' fate,
An' battle ower a pledg'd estate,—
A plackless, barefac'd, landless vilkain,

Digitized by Google

An' as he stood, not worth a shilling.
The baron view'd wi' pride an' joy,
Nick an' his dochter grow sae coy,
Gaz'd long wi' contemplative praise,
An' thocht that he could end his days.
This was the capstane o' his life,
Tae see her wed an' be a wife.
Puir man! he little ken'd that she
Was jist a beam within his e'e.
Nell cast her een upon De-Blinker—
My sang, he was a famous tinker—
She steppin' deftly tae his side,
Appear'd before him in her pride:
"My cloak an' necklace, Blinker, quick;
I am goin' to have a chat wi' Nick."
"Your cloak an' necklace, I ne'er saw them,—
Upon my oath, I ne'er did claw them."
"Why, I gave them to you for to hold:
There now, you need not grow so bold."
"My dearest love, I tell you true,
I never had those things from you."
"Now, Blinker, look me in the face,
You do not mean me a disgrace."
"I tell you, Miss, I am a sleeper,—
I cannot be your wardrobe-keeper;
Or if I had, some one has stole them."
"Stole them? then, by jing, I 'll quickly gaol them!
Who stole them, quick, come tell me all;
I 'll call the guard, an' search the hall."
"You never had them on, I swear,
Nor left them underneath my care."

Jock inwards curs'd the leein' sneak,
Richt loth was he tae budge or speak;
But noo rous'd up, he bawled, wi' ire,
"Get oot, ye liar!
I saw ye throw them i' the fire."
Next, quick as lightning, was his thocht,
The coort-yaird yett he quickly socht;
Knock't ower twa warders in the skurry,—
Jock was in sic a desperate hurry.
High in the air there was a shock,
While echo answer'd rock frae rock,—
A lichtning's flash sae gleaming bricht,
Which near bereft Jock o' his sicht;

Digitized by Google

Syne there was ae lood peal o' thunder,
As heaven an' yirth were rent asunder.
'Boon the uproar there was a clash,
Giff as Craigmillar had fa'n in smash.
Aroond Jock were the hordes o' hell,
On every side a screech an' yell,
On ilka hand a yawning gulley,
Whaur sauters brandish'd spear or tullie.
The crew press'd forward,—hungry hounds
Could never mak' sic yelpin' sounds.
But striding foremaist in the race,
Jock sat wi' blanch'd an' whiten'd face,
The very picture o' grim death,
Wi' fell despair an' bated breath;
The madden'd host were gainin' on him,
Ah, Bell! puir Jock, ye 'll sair be moanin'.

Flee, filly, flee: rin for your life;
I wish we were baith ower in Fife.
The filly ran wi' micht an' main—
My, could he but the Powburn gain—
Wi' spur an' switch, Jock urged it on.
De-Blinker in the foremaist shone,
Wi' monie a hellish bann an' shout,
He curs'd the vile an' earthly lout—
What he wad dae when he had got him,
He 'd let him smell hell's brumstane bottom,—
Was sae intent tae tak' Jock's life,
Ne'er thocht he 'd lost his bride an' wife.

Doon the lang road sae drear an' dreich
The minions flew wi' shout and skreich;
Before Jock loom'd the woodland trees,
The Pow was swellin' on the breeze.
Hard, hard, he tried the race tae settle,
His filly was the best o' mettle.
But what on yirth could hae the pooer
Tae rin 'gainst what seem'd win' an stoor?
But anither rival in the race
Had sprung tae De-Blinker's place,
Won nearly past him, when he cried,—
It was nae you 'gainst which he lied,
Fizz, Blinker, had an' stap yer breath,
'T is I will be yon catiff's death.
He yince did dook me in his dam,—

Digitized by Google

I 'll catch him as shure 's my name is Tam.
De-Blinker swore a horrid oath,
Tae alloo that he 'd be gie loàth ;
His twa een blaz'd like coals o' fire,
His sark was off, rous'd was his ire,
He clutch'd Tam by the throat, till both
Strugglin' fell tae the ground in froth ;
Fechtin' an' rivein' like twa bears,
Ruggin' an' tuggin' ilk ithers' hairs ;
Gruesome they grain'd, an' growl'd, an' grunt'd,
Glaum'd, scratch'd, an' bit, hard ither dunted.
We 'll let them fecht : the crood flew on,
Till, startl'd wi' a squeak an' moan,
Pell-mell they ran, an' strain'd, an' rush'd,
The hinmaist ower the foremaist push'd ;
While those in front were a' dung ower,
The crush had been the death o' four.

They a' drew up, what did they see,—
A suicide hangin' on a tree ;
Kickin' oot in his death's struggle,
Gapein' an' spittin' oot a bubble.
His een they whamell'd roond aboot,
Far frae their sockets stickin' oot.
Roond they cluster'd, thick as bees,
The loon had gi'en his latest sneeze.
Hurrah ! hurrah ! they clapp'd their hands,
We 've gotten what will fill oor bands,
Let 's cut him doon, ere life 's bereft,
A wee spark 's a' that 's in him left.
Wha is 't ? Wha is he ? Ken ye his name ?
Were questions speir'd,—let 's take him hame.
Let 's see his face,—what is he like,
I think I shurely ken the tyke.
I ken't him for a sausage maker,
Likewise a funeral undertaker,
As big a cheet as e'er drew breath,
Nae wunder than he 's ta'en his death ;
I wunder gin he tint his reason,
What way he didna cut his weazon.
The scaurin' brute he 's dune us ill ;
Bye noo, the miller 's at his mill,
An' ower the Pow we 've fairly lost him,—
By jingo, I should like tae toast him.
I ken't this yin for a vaparin tauchie,

Digitized by Google

As thrawn a rip as e'er chaw'd bauchie;
Aye, an' tae boot, jist for ae groat,
He 's sever'd monie a human throat.
Ye couldna' find a bigger villain,
Tae dae the trick he was aye willin'.
Let 's whusk him doon, syne on the rack
We 'll gaur the hooly bodie crack.
I wish tae peace we 'd catch'd the miller,
I 'm thinkin' he had lots o' siller;
But mark ye weel, be on his track,
An' nail him next time he comes back.
The lad is fond o' bapps an' yill—
My sang, we 'll mak' 'im pay his bill!
We 'll play 'im a plisky for this nicht,
An' putin' us in sic a plicht.
It 's no the first nicht—wearie blast him!—
Staggerin' drunk, that I ha'e pass'd him,
Spoilin' a' oor sport. He 'll rue—
Wi' that the cock richt shrilly crew.
A whirlwind swept the earth an' air—
The hellish host were seen nae mair.

Maist smoor'd amangst the drifted snaw,
The miller scarce a breath could draw,
He was sae near the howe o' death,
Sair, sair he gap'd an' gasp'd for breath;
Had lost ae death an' fand anither—
He was fairly dune for athegither.
The tauchie sair the filly scared,
Got sic a gliff, it fair uprair'd;
Syne, wi' its hint heels in the air,
It flung an' pitch'd puir Jockie there,
Oot ower a dyke amangst the snaw,
Syne hameward it ran fleein' awa'.
It was gude for him, douce honest man,
That he had fa'en as he had fa'en;
Had De-Blinker catch'd him in his flicht,
Jock micht ha'e bid this warld gude nicht;
Wha kens—indeed, ane scarce can tell—
He micht ha'e open'd his een in hell.
What were Jock's thochts there as he lay
Is mair than I 've a richt tae say.
Oblivious o' baith bliss an' glory,
O' gentle jew, or whig or tory,
I daur-say he 'd be gie an' donnert—
An', gude-sake, can ye really wonner 't.

Digitized by Google

The filly sprung ower heighs an' howes,
Swept like the wind through Cairntows,
Hameward like a shadow bounding,
Hameward it went snorting, pounding,
Nor stop'd till it had reach'd Jock's door,
When Bell jump'd up wi' sic a roar.
Sae monie thochts she had invented,
Puir wife, she was near han' demented!
Nodding ower the fire, an' dozin',
Jist hauflins in her chair reposin';
She neither had been sleepin', wauken,
An' sic a gliff—she was a' shaukin';
While collie set up sic a howl,
As maist bereft her o' her sowl;
It scrapit at the door an' barkit,
Syne it stop'd, whimper'd, harkit;
It snuff'd, an' kick'd up sic a din,
Bell tae the door did stagg'rin' rin;
Open'd the door, look'd oot at nicht—
A riderless horse—Oh, what a sicht!
The filly it could scarcely stan',
The hailin' sweat doon aff it ran,
While collie barkit, an' it yelpit,
Syne ran as if it had been skelpit—
Its tail between its legs—an' growled,
Ran 'neath the bed, an' there it howled.

Oh, whaur's John? what's come o' him?
John, man! John, jist drap yer whim!
Nane o' yer bogle tricks wi' me—
Man, dae ye think I canna see?
Sic time o' nicht tae play yer pranks,
Tak' tent ye dinna feel the branks;
Gang, pit the filly in the stable—
Or I will dae't, gif ye're no able.
Aye, man, John, but ye're awfu' cunnin',
I see ye fine—nane o' yer funnin';
Dae ye no heed the tempest roar—
Mak' haste man, or I'll steek the door.
But feint a John was there tae speak—
Bell felt as if her heart wad break.
Wi' woman's instinct, Bell guess'd a'—
John's kill'd, an' deid amangst the snaw.
Waes me, but I'm a wae, wae wife,
Oh, noo that I were reft o' life!

Digitized by Google

My bonnie bairns, what will we dae?
Noucht's left us noo but dool an' wae;
Oh, dinna greet, puir innocent lambs—
Curs'd be a' they wha deal in drams.
Speir'd for its maister at the filly—
Sae witless like, as she were silly.
The filly stood an' shook wi' dread,
Wi' pantin' sides an' droopin' head—
Come, tell me, filly, whaur's my John,
Whaur, whaur, is he—ochone, ochone?
My bonnie beast, whaur did ye lea' him—
Oh, will I never nae mair see him?
She put the filly in the stable,
An' then, as shune as she was able,
Bell went an' tellt her tale tae Hab
Wi' monie a sair heart-breakin' sab.
Gude keep me, woman! John no hame?
An' me lyin' here—O, fie for shame!—
Jist bide or I throw on my claise;
The nei'bours, I doubt, we'll ha'e tae raise,
An' mak' a search on every han';
Wae's me, but I can scarcely stan',
Aye, I never heard the like before—
The twa were noo ootside the door—
We'll tae the bellman, Sandie Clark,
Get him tae help us in this wark.
But when they got tae Sandie's door,
Inside they heard him blaw an' snore;
He, tae, had booz'd within the taivern,
An' spent the nicht, wi' drink an' claiverin',
At Betty Coote's, in the Sheep's Heid,
An' noo he slept as he were deid.
They reel'd an' reesl'd at the door—
Sandie had gi'en a fainter snore;
Hauf sleepin' in the bed he sat,
An' syne bawl'd oot, Wha's that? wha's that?
Thinkin' some cheilds, bent on dissection,
Had roos'd him for a resurrection—
Awa' frae there, an' hame ye go,
I tell ye ance for a', I'll no;
Ye murderin', vile, corpse-huntin' set,
Are ye no pleased wi' what ye get;
Na, awa'; I'll never lift anither body,
I swore 't last nicht when ower my toddy.
Will ye no gaun?—haith, if I rise

Digitized by Google

I'll tak' ye a' wi' some surprise—
Aye, what? keep me! what dae I hear?
Ah, megsty, bless me! that is queer;
Is that you, Hab—I'm shurely daz'd.
Oot ower the bed Clark lap an' rais'd,
Grop'd for the latch, it was sae dark,
An' there he stood, jist in his sark.
When he heard a', an' kent the news,
He was nae lang or he did roose;
He lifted up his hands in horror,
As, shiverin' there, he stood before 'er,
Drew on his duds wi' muckle speed,
Tae help Bell in her hoor o' need, ;
Ran tae the kirkyaird for his dug—
It was prime o' scent, an' sharp o' lug—
Syne took their ways, wi' lanterns lichted,
Tae seek the man that was benichted.
They searched far, they looked near,
But naething could they see or hear;
What wi' fatigue an' thocht, at length
Bell nearly swaurf'd for lack o' strength.
Cheer up! cried Clark, ye maunie snool,
It'll never dae tae yield tae dool—
We'll find John, there is little doot.
Clark bade his mastiff seek it oot—
Unless he's speerited away,
We'll find him wi' the licht o' day—
In every nook it ran an' smell'd,
Till at the tree it bark'd an' yell'd,
Snuff'd here an' there, look'd ower the dyke,
Jist like a human—sae anxious like.
At length Hab thocht he heard a moan,
An' then an unco sich an' groan,
Harkit, star'd, an' glower'd intent,
Nae mair he heard—the maine was spent;
Cried on the lave tae quickly come,
As he was neither deif nor dumb;
Tell'd them what he thocht he heard—
They a' stood still, as they were scaur'd.
At length the dug loup'd ower the wa',
An' then began tae scrape the snaw;
The nei'bours on its heels hard follow'd,
An' syne the snaw was quickly hollow'd—
An' there Jock lay maist cauld as death,
Wi' feeble maine, an' scant o' breath.

Digitized by Google

Bell nearly swoon'd an' fell wi' fricht—
Tae her it was an awesome sicht.
The nei'bours glad as frien's could be,
When something comes tae cheer the e'e—
Noo they had fand the man they socht,
A kindly kind o' fear it brocht.
Jock shouther high was gently hiestit,
Nae power had he for tae resist it;
Hameward they went wi' micht an' main.
An' when the village they did gain,
The hale place was in sic a steer—
Wi' some wi' grief, an' some wi' fear;
The weans cam' rinin' for tae meet them,
On ilka han' some ane did greet them;
At ilka door the wives a' speer'd,
Cried, praise be blest! when they had heard;
A wee while at the door-cheek waited,
Ere they the mystery had debated.
Noo Jock 's at hame, let him lye there,
Nurs'd an' doctor'd wi' Bell's care,
An' Kirsty Black, the village howdie,
Wi' warm baths an' sipps o' toddie.
Twa weeks Jock lay, an' rav'd deleerit,
Aboot warlocks an' the evil speerit;
Wi' De-Blinker's name he aften blent it,
Syne laugh'd an' said he brawly kent it—
He was naething but o' cheats the chief.
Syne Jock wad roar oot thief, thief, thief!
Cried, filly, rin! flee for ye 're life!
I wish we were baith ower in Fife;
Then draw the bed-claise ower his heid,
Syne lie stock still as he were deid;
While Doctor Woodhead, wi' lang face,
Declar'd it was a dangerous case.
When Sunday came, the minister's text
Was sae it made the folk a' vex't;
In the congregation you could see
The saut tears hailin' frae ilk e'e,
He went sae deep intae the subjec',
Sparin' neither words nor logic;
He little dream'd, nor never knew,
The facts that I ha'e tellt tae you;
Jock keep'd it a' untae himsel',
But slyly tellt the hale tae Bell.

Digitized by Google

When Wattie Young an' Stitchie heard
That Jock had been sae fearfu' scaur'd,
Wi' Sooter Davie they cam' ower,
An' kept their vigils monie an hour;
Rab Tamson grat like onie bairn,
Although his frame was strong as airn,
His heart was aye as saft as butter,
An' melted wi' the slichtest flutter;
Deep mournin' for his cronie sair,
Wi' heartfelt grief, the smith sat there,
Took a' the blame—he was nae blate—
For keepin' Jock that nicht sae late;
He wad ne'er forgi'e himsel', he said,
For the sad plisky Jock was play'd.
Tae ken the facts the foursome tried,
Jock only shook his heid an' sigh'd—
Na, na, quo' Jock, I winna tell,
I've vow'd tae keep it tae mysel';
I dinna ken hoo I fell there,
It seems tae me sae blank an' bare;
But this I ken, I got a fricht—
I'll never ride sae late at nicht.
The filly's useless for a' gude,
T'is loosin' flesh, an' tines its fude;
It's almost spent tae skin an' bone,
Sae dowie has the puir beast grown.
An' frae the bottom o' my heart,
I thank ye for yer kindly part;
It's a secret I am bound tae keep—
I ha'e sworn it solemnly an' deep.
Weel, weel, John King, ye ken yersel',
T'is maybe richt ye shouldnae tell;
We've ane an' a' been great transgressors—
Besides, ye ken, we're not confessors.
But dinna think we meant tae jest,
We meant it a', John, for the best.
Sae noo, gude-day, an' strength an' health,
May you an' Bell be routh o' wealth,
An' never need a plack tae borrow—
May kind gude keep ye in yer sorrow;
An' mind, when ye get strong an' weel,
Stap ower an' see's, my cantie chiel;
We'll be ower glad tae see ye, man—
Sae noo, gude-bye; let's ha'e yer han',

Digitized by Google

The nei'bours, ilka ane, remarkit
Hoo Jock was chang'd at kirk an' market—
Let the nicht be wat or fair,
Jock was never seen drunk mair.
It was funny if ye catch'd him roamin'—
Someway he aye slipp'd hame at gloamin';
Look'd far mair douce, though ye could tell
He was aften mutterin' tae himsel';
An' was fond o' gi'eing a sage advice—
For he had grown sae wonderous wice.
E'en Bell was chang'd, an' that uncommon,
Though she had been a gentle woman.

Noo, if this tale has dune nae mair
Than teach boon boosers tae beware
Hoo they mispend their time at nicht,
An' aye be hame by broad daylicht—
Especially when their word is gi'en—
For they micht never mair be seen.
Though Jock was fand, that 's no tae sae
But they micht be speerited away—
Especially when the hoors are sma',
An' winter wreaths the yirth wi' snaw;
That hame 's the best place they can spend
Their ance mad hoors; sae will I end.

Had this been a Trades Union case,
It micht ha'e shown a blacker face.
By swearing Trades Union were a lee,
Sent twa 'r three fellows ower the sea,
Or sax month's penal servitude,
Tae claw their shins an' cool their blude.
I hope my reader plainly sees
That it is a' a clash o' lees.

J. F.

Digitized by Google

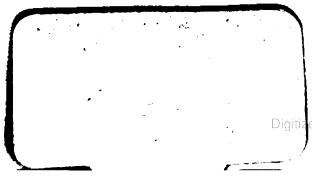
Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google


Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google